

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background of the study, research questions, research objectives, research scope, the significance of study and clarification of terms.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Student conversation is regarded as important in language learning. According to Sadeghi & Richards (2015), the measurement of the students' mastery in speaking skill is on how well they interact in conversation. By interacting with others, students convey various purposes that involve others to understand what they mean. At this point, students have to have good speaking skills so that the students can interact with each other as they understand what is being said. Halliday (1994) stated that to create interaction, the variety of meaning in language is presented. Furthermore, by having conversations, students can have opportunities to enhance their English skills. Students attempted to use a variation of strategies to convey meaning in English. Therefore, it is essential to explore speech function in learner interaction.

Speech function can be utilized to explore how learners interact with others. According to Batubara (2020), speech function refers to the form of language, namely statement, question, offer and command that can be the performance or action of language users, which they are carried out during a verbal engagement or conversation. In using speech function, students carry their relationships among the other students. Moreover, Pambudi et al (2022) also argue that in order to accomplish particular communication goals, learners must understand a variety of speech functions and how to structure them. This is because the speakers need to keep the conversation going by choosing the speech function. There are several kinds of learner interaction.

Learners' interaction in classroom were divided into two categories, one of which is group work interaction. In the classroom, learner-learner interaction is one of the types of interactions. Learner-learner interaction consists of a group of

learners and peer interactions. According to Sharp and Huett (2006), the role of the learners in these interactions are sharing knowledge to their friends and receiving feedback from other learners. Group of learners is also known as group work. Group work enables students to practice and take turns in the learning process. Walton (1997) defined group work as the unrestricted communication in the group that consists of the leader and member of the group. Furthermore, Walton (1997) also stated that group work enables students to practice more with other students while it cannot happen in the learning process. According to McCrorie (2006), groupwork is established in purpose to produce individual activity as foundation for interaction among students. Group work provides disadvantages and advantages.

There are various advantages of group work. According to Brown (2001) and Harmer (2003), group work has several advantages. Group work allows language processing among students progresses from pieces and units to more complex grammatical patterns more quickly and spontaneously. Moreover, group work provides students more opportunities to interact and speak the target language freely when they work in groups. Furthermore, learning a language provides considerably greater meaning. In addition, group work fosters a good environment by removing some students' vulnerability to public displays that could result in rejection or criticism. Likewise, learners' autonomy and responsibility are promoted through group work. Then, group work promotes the implementation of the multiple intelligences' idea, which calls for students to draw on their unique skills to complete a task, which is supported and strengthened by group work. Last, Group work gives the teacher the chance to introduce turn-taking techniques. Moreover, there are some researchers that explore the speech function in some aspects of communication. Garrett and Shortall (2002) also found that group work allowed students to practice the target language more, increased concentration in learners and their engagement with interaction sitting and reduced anxiety in language learners. McDonough (2004), in his research, found that it is helpful for them in learning language by talking with their friends.

Nevertheless, group work provides disadvantages. According to Salas (2005), there are three disadvantages of group work. The first disadvantage is the class will be noisy. As the students attempt to speak at the same time, noise will

start to arise. The second disadvantage is some teachers might find it difficult to maintain control over the class, particularly when it pertains to discipline. The third disadvantage is the usage of native language and also the lack of error correction. Other challenges found in Alfares' (2017) research were some students perceived that it was wasting time to do something by group work and there were some students who did not participate in the discussion due to low proficiency in the target language.

Speech function can be utilized to explore the utterance in various contexts. Speech function can be analyzed to explore the utterance in debate (Fahmi & Rustomo, 2018; Hadiningrum, 2020). Moreover, speech function can be analyzed to explore the utterance in movies (Oktadisto et al, 2018; Damayanti & Sujatna, 2022). Furthermore, speech functions can be used to analyze the language used for marketing purposes (Andriani, 2018; Batubara, 2020). In addition, casual conversation can be analyzed by speech functions (Nasri et al, 2006; Masykuri et al, (2020). Besides those contexts, there were several researchers who seek the speech function in educational context.

There are a number of researches that concern the speech function analysis in educational context. Speech function can be analysed to explore the utterance in secondary school context (Taridi et al, 2022; Wiyanto, 2020) Moreover, there are some researchers who explored the speech function used at tertiary level (Mahendra & Zulham, 2017; Arumdani & Rosaline, 2022), Apart from the formal classroom context, there were some research that examined the speech function in informal classrooms context (Basra & Thoyyibah, 2017; Yuliana et al, 2019). All of the studies that have been described above focus on the speech function analysis in outside classroom context and teacher-student interaction. However, there is still rare research on learner-learner interaction.

Therefore, the researcher conducted the research entitled “Exploring Speech Function in Learners’ Interaction in EFL Senior High School Classroom Group Work” based on the discussion.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

Referring to the background of the current study, there were two research

questions in this study, namely:

1. What types of speech functions and mood do students use in group work interaction?
2. What are the challenges and strategies that students encounter to perform speech function in group work interaction?

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The objectives of the study were defined by the research questions, namely:

1. To investigate the types speech functions and mood used by the students in a group work interaction.
2. To investigate the challenges and strategies that the students encounter to perform speech function in a group work interaction.

### **1.4 The Scope of the Study**

The scope of the current study were analyzing and identifying the speech functions and moods which the students used in learner-learner interaction in EFL Classroom and the challenges and strategies that they encounter in performing speech functions in the interaction. The participants were 12 students from Senior High School in Bandung.

### **1.5 The Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study are expected to provide theoretical and practical advantageous in English language teaching and learning.

Theoretically, this research enriches the theories related to SFL especially in speech function context in learner-learner interaction. Practically, this research is useful for teachers to facilitate students to interact with other students so they are able to use English effectively.

### **1.6 Clarification of Terms**

To avoid misunderstandings regarding the terms used in this study, the terms of speech function, learner's interaction and group work are described.

Speech Function

Speech function is the speaker's role (asking and demanding roles) and the content being exchanged (information, goods and services), which they are carried out during a verbal engagement or conversation (Saragih, 2014). In this current study, speech function refers to the initiating and responding speech function.

#### Learners Interaction

Learner-learner interaction is the interaction occurring between a learner and other learners in a small group (Moore, 1989). In this current study, the learner-learner interaction was the interaction of students in discussion. Thus, both the term learners and students are used interchangeably in this paper.

#### Group Work

Group work as the unrestricted communication in the group that consists of the leader and member of the group (Walton, 1997). In this current study, group work and group of learners can be used interchangeably that refers to the same concept.